



**County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

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August 10, 2012

To: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "P. Browning", is written over the printed name and title.

**AVIVA FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW**

The Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a review of Aviva Family and Children's Services Foster Family Agency (Aviva FFA) in February 2012, at which time the agency had a total of 26 Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) placed children and 19 certified homes. The placed children's overall length of placement was 11 months, and the average age was five.

Aviva Family and Children's Services FFA is located in the Third Supervisorial District and provides services to LA County DCFS foster youth. According to Aviva FFA's program statement, its stated goal is "to provide specialized, supportive foster care homes in Los Angeles County, and thereby maximize the children's potential for optimal growth and development." Aviva FFA is licensed to serve children ranging from birth through 18.

For the purpose of this review, seven children and four certified foster parent files were initially selected for our sample. Upon completion of the files, and prior to the home visits, one of the children selected for the sample was reunified with a relative, and we then selected an additional home file with two additional placed children for the review. Therefore, a total of nine children's files and five certified foster parent files were selected and included as a part of our sample for the purpose of the review. Of the nine children's files reviewed, seven children were visited for face-to-face interviews

and six children were interviewed as one child was non-verbal. Of the five certified foster parent's files reviewed, three were visited. We also reviewed five discharged children's files and five staff files for compliance with Title 22 Regulations and the County contract requirements.

Three placed children were prescribed psychotropic medication. We reviewed their case files to assess the timeliness of Psychotropic Medication Authorization (PMAs), and to confirm that documentation of psychiatric monitoring was maintained as required.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The purpose of this review was to assess Aviva FFA's compliance with the contract and State regulations. The visit included a review of the Agency's program statement, administrative internal policies and procedures, nine placed children's case files, five certified foster parent files, and five personnel files. Three certified foster homes were visited and the foster parents were interviewed to assess the quality of care and supervision provided to the children; and seven placed children were interviewed to assess the care and services they were receiving.

A copy of this report has been sent to the Auditor-Controller (A-C) and Community Care Licensing (CCL).

SUMMARY

Overall, the children interviewed reported feeling safe, being provided with good care and appropriate services, were comfortable in their environment and treated with respect and dignity.

The deficiencies noted during the monitoring review were in the areas of Certified Foster Homes and Facility and Environment.

Based on our review, the aforementioned deficiencies revealed the need for more thorough home inspections and on-going documentation. Additionally, routine monitoring of the files by supervisory staff would appear to eliminate the documentation issues identified.

In conclusion, Aviva FFA was receptive to implementing some systemic changes to improve their compliance with regulations and the County contract. The Administrator agreed to address the noted deficiencies in a Corrective Action Plan (CAP).

NOTABLE FINDINGS

The following are the notable findings of our review:

- Of the five certified foster parents' files reviewed, one certified foster parent's home study was dated six weeks after the date of their initial certification. Per the current FFA Administrator, she located documentation from the previous staff, which noted that while the home study process was completed, prior to certification of the family, it was not signed or dated prior to the date of certification. It was also noted that the certified foster parents did not have any placements at the time of certification and has only had one placement, effective December 2010.
- Of the five certified foster parents' files reviewed, one foster father had verification of a TB test, but did not have a current health-screening on file with the Agency. Per the FFA Administrator, the foster mother was formally certified and the foster father was not a certified foster parent, but was living in the foster home. During the review process, the FFA Administrator instructed the foster father to obtain a current health-screening and TB test for the foster father as a back-up caregiver and verification was provided upon completion.
- Of the five certified foster parents' files reviewed, one file did not have a health-screening/TB test for the foster mother's adult grandson who resides in the home. Subsequent to the review, the FFA Administrator ensured that the adult grandson obtained a TB test and verification was provided.
- Of the three certified foster homes visited, one had metal space heaters on the floor accessible to the young children in the home. This was immediately brought to the FFA Administrator's attention and verification was provided that the space heaters were no longer being used and that the FFA was assisting the foster mother in having her heating repaired. OHCMD has since provided Aviva FFA with the "Keeping Our Homes Safe from Carbon Monoxide" reference guide, which also includes information of the safe use of space/electrical portable heaters.
- Of the three certified foster homes visited, one had an unlocked tool shed, which was accessible to the children and one child's bed was blocking the emergency release for the security bars on the bedroom window. Subsequent to the review, the FFA Administrator provided verification that the tool shed has been securely locked and the bed has been relocated to allow for unrestricted access to the security bars. The FFA Administrator indicated that the FFA would routinely monitor the home for on-going compliance.

A detailed report of our findings is attached.

EXIT CONFERENCE

The following are highlights from the Exit Conference held March 15, 2012.

In attendance:

Ira Kruskol, LCSW, Vice President Community Services; Althea Bassett, Director of Adoptions and ITFC Programs, Aviva FFA and Cori Shaffer, CSA I, Monitor, DCFS OHCMD.

Highlights:

During the Exit Conference, Aviva FFA's Vice President and Director were in agreement with our findings and recommendations. The Aviva FFA Director provided verification that the physical plant issues in the homes were corrected and that the Agency provided a plan of oversight to ensure on-going monitoring of the homes.

Aviva FFA submitted a timely approved written CAP, which addresses each recommendation noted in this compliance report. The approved CAP is attached.

We will assess for full implementation of the recommendations during our next monitoring review.

If you have any questions, please call me or your staff may contact Aldo Marin, Board Relations Manager, at (213) 351-5530.

PLB:RRS:KR:
EAH:Nf:cs

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Wendy Watanabe, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Ira Kruskol, LCSW, Aviva FFA, Vice President of Community Services
Jean Chen, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing

**AVIVA FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW SUMMARY**

**7120 Franklin Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90046
License #: 197804303**

	Contract Compliance Monitoring Review	Findings: February 2012
I	<u>Licensure/Contract Requirements</u> (6 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Timely Notification for Child's Relocation 2. SIRs Documented and Cross-Reported 3. Runaway Procedures 4. Community Care Licensing Citations, Out-of-Home Care Management Division Reports on Safety and Physical Deficiencies 5. If Applicable, FFA Ensures Complete Required Whole Foster Family Home Training 6. FFA Pays Certified Foster Parents Whole Foster Family Home Payments 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Full Compliance 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Full Compliance 5. Not Applicable 6. Not Applicable
II	<u>Certified Foster Homes</u> (13 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Home Study Prior to Certification 2. Contact with References/Including Check with OHCMD 3. Safety Inspection Prior to Certification 4. Timely DOJ, FBI, CACI 5. Health-Screening Prior to Certification 6. Required Training Prior to Certification 7. Current Certificate of Approval on File Including Capacity 8. Home Inspection/Evaluations for Re-certification 9. Completed Training Hours for Re-certification 10. CPR/First-Aid/Water Safety Certificates 11. CDL/Auto Insurance 12. Other Adults: DOJ/FBI/CACI/Other Required DOCS 13. Transportation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Needs Improvement 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Full Compliance 5. Full Compliance 6. Full Compliance 7. Full Compliance 8. Full Compliance 9. Full Compliance 10. Full Compliance 11. Full Compliance 12. Needs Improvement 13. Full Compliance

III	<u>Facility and Environment</u> (8 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exterior Well Maintained 2. Common Areas Maintained 3. Children's Bedrooms/Interior Maintained 4. Sufficient Recreational Equipment 5. Sufficient Educational Resources 6. Adequate Perishable and Non Perishable Food 7. Disaster Drills Conducted 8. Allowance Logs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Needs Improvement 2. Needs Improvement 3. Needs Improvement 4. Full Compliance 5. Full Compliance 6. Full Compliance 7. Full Compliance 8. Full Compliance
IV	<u>Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery</u> (11 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DCFS CSW Authorization to Implement NSPs 2. Children's Participation in the Development of NSPs 3. NSPs Implemented and Discussed with Foster Parents 4. Children's Progress Towards Meeting Goals 5. Timely Developed Initial NSPs with Child 6. Timely Comprehensive Initial NSPs with Child 7. Therapeutic Services Received 8. Recommended Assessments/Evaluations Implemented 9. DCFS CSWs Monthly Contacts Documented 10. Timely Developed Updated NSPs with Child 11. Timely Comprehensive Updated NSPs with Child 	Full Compliance (ALL)
V	<u>Education and Workforce Readiness</u> (7 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children Enrolled in School Within Three Days 2. Children Attended School as Required 3. Agency Facilitates Child's Educational Goals 4. Child's Academic and/or Attendance Increase 5. Current IEPs Maintained 6. Current Report Cards Maintained 7. Agency Facilitates Children's Participation in YDS/Equivalent/Vocational Programs 	Full Compliance (ALL)

VI	<u>Health and Medical Needs</u> (6 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initial Medical Examinations Conducted 2. Initial Medical Examinations Timely 3. Follow-up Medical Examinations Timely 4. Initial Dental Examinations Conducted 5. Initial Dental Examinations Timely 6. Follow-up Dental Examinations Timely 	Full Compliance (ALL)
VII	<u>Psychotropic Medications</u> (2 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current Court Authorization for Administration of Psychotropic Medication 2. Current Psychiatric Evaluation Review 	Full Compliance (ALL)
VIII	<u>Personal Rights and Social Emotional Well-Being</u> (13 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children Informed of Foster Home's Policies and Procedures 2. Children Feel Safe 3. Satisfaction with Meals and Snacks 4. Foster Parents Treatment of Children with Respect and Dignity 5. Appropriate Rewards and Discipline System 6. Children Allowed Private Visits, Calls, and Correspondence 7. Children Free to Attend Religious Services/Activities 8. Reasonable Chores 9. Children Informed About Psychotropic Medication 10. Children Aware of Right to Refuse Psychotropic Medication 11. Children Informed About Voluntary Refusal of Medical and Dental Care 12. Children Participation in At-Home, School, Community Activities 13. Children Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities 	Full Compliance (ALL)

IX	<u>Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being</u> (8 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clothing Allowance 2. On-going Clothing Inventories of Adequate Quantity 3. On-going Clothing Inventories of Adequate Quality 4. Involvement in Selection of Clothing 5. Provision of Personal Care Items 6. Minimum Monetary Allowances 7. Management of Allowance 8. Encouragement and Assistance with Life Book 	Full Compliance (ALL)
X	<u>Discharged Children</u> (3 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stabilization of Placement Prior to Discharge 2. Discharge Summary Completed 3. Child Completed High School 	Full Compliance (ALL)
XI	<u>Personnel Records</u> (14 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DOJ Timely Submitted 2. FBI Timely Submitted (After January 1, 2008) 3. CACIs Timely Submitted 4. Signed Criminal Background Statement Timely 5. Education/Experience Requirement 6. Employee Health-Screening Timely 7. Valid Driver's License 8. Signed Copies of FFA Policies and Procedures 9. Initial Training Documentation 10. One-Hour Training of Child Abuse Reporting 11. CPR Training Documentation 12. First-Aid Training Documentation 13. On-going Training Documentation 14. Social Workers Appropriate Case Ratio 	Full Compliance (ALL)

**AVIVA FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW**

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The following report is based on a "point in time" monitoring visit. This compliance report addresses findings noted during the February 2012 monitoring review.

CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE

Based on the results of the compliance review, Aviva Family and Children's Services Foster Family Agency (Aviva FFA) was in full compliance with nine of 11 sections of our Contract Compliance Review: Licensure/Contract Requirements; Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery; Education and Workforce Readiness; Health and Medical Needs; Psychotropic Medication; Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being; Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being; Discharged Children and Personnel Records. The following report details the results of our review.

CERTIFIED FOSTER HOMES

Based on our review of five certified foster parents' case files and/or documentation from the provider, Aviva FFA was in full compliance with 11 of the 13 elements reviewed in the area.

We noted that for one certified foster parent, the Agency's home study was completed and signed six weeks after the date of initial certification. For another certified foster home, there was no initial health-screening on file for the foster father, who although he was not considered a co-parent at the time of certification, he was a back-up caregiver and we found only an initial TB test on file for him. For another certified foster home, we noted that the foster mother's adult grandson resides in the home; however, we did not find a health-screening and TB on file for him.

Recommendations:

Aviva FFA's management shall ensure that:

1. Home studies for all certified foster parents are conducted prior to initial certification and documentation is maintained in the certified foster parent files.
2. All certified foster parents and/or additional adults in the home have a required health-screening and TB test, not more than one year old, on file with the FFA.

3. All other adults, regularly present in the foster homes, shall have a completed TB test performed not more than one year before the placement of the first foster child in the home, and that documentation is maintained in the certified foster parent files.

FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

Based on our review of five certified foster parents' files and/or documentation from the provider and visits to three of the certified foster homes, Aviva FFA fully complied with five of eight elements reviewed.

During OHCMD's visits to one of the certified foster home, we noted that there were two metal space heaters, one in each of the children's bedrooms that were hot to the touch and were accessible to the four young children residing in the home. The OHCMD monitor immediately notified the FFA Administrator who instructed the certified foster parent to refrain from using the space heaters. Per the FFA staff, the foster mother is in the process of having her heating system repaired and the FFA staff continues to monitor the foster home for on-going compliance and child safety. OHCMD has since provided Aviva FFA with the "Keeping Our Homes Safe from Carbon Monoxide" reference guide, which also includes information on the safe use of space/electrical portable heaters.

During OHCMD's visit to another certified foster home, OHCMD noted that one placed child's bed was blocking the emergency release bar for the safety bars on the window. The FFA Administrator was immediately contacted and the FFA provided verification that the bed was moved to allow for access to the emergency release and that a new disaster drill was conducted with the children in the bedroom to include instructions on the emergency release.

In the same home we noted that the shed in the backyard was unlocked and accessible to the children in the home. Following our visit to the home, we were informed by the FFA that this shed contained a safe (which was hidden away, out of view, with an antique gun with no ammunition). During the review, the FFA provided verification that the gun was locked and inoperable and that shed was locked and will be locked at all times.

Recommendation:

Aviva FFA's management shall ensure that:

4. Certified foster homes' common areas are well maintained, that on-going safety is maintained at all times and that the FFA staff routinely monitor the homes for on-going compliance and documentation is maintained in the certified foster parent files.

5. All children's bedrooms are properly maintained, are in good repair and ensure on-going child safety at all times; that the FFA routinely monitor the homes for on-going compliance and that documentation is maintained in the certified foster parent files.
6. Certified foster homes exteriors are well-maintained and safe, that the FFA routinely monitor the homes for on-going compliance and that documentation is maintained in the certified foster parent files.

PRIOR YEAR FOLLOW-UP FROM THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER'S COMPLIANCE REPORT

Objective

Determine the status of the recommendations reported in the A-C's prior monitoring report.

Verification

We verified whether the outstanding recommendations from the A-C's last compliance review dated October 1, 2008 were implemented.

Results

The A-C's prior compliance report contained nine outstanding recommendations. Aviva FFA's management was to ensure that staff adequately monitor foster homes to ensure they comply with the County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations; that foster parents adequately secure knives, detergents, cleaning solutions and other items that could pose a potential safety hazard to the children; that foster homes have operable smoke detectors in the hallways to the children's bedrooms; that foster homes are clean for the well-being of the children; that the yards (exteriors) of foster homes are well maintained and free of potential safety hazards; that foster homes' emergency plans include an adequate means of escape from the second story of the home in case of emergency; that children received appropriate medical services recommended by their physicians; that foster parents provide age-appropriate weekly allowances to children consistent with the Program Statement and maintain the required documentation; and that children and the County social workers receive a comprehensive overview of the Agency's policies. Based on our follow-up of these recommendations, Aviva Family and Services FFA, seven of nine recommendations were fully implemented.

Recommendation:

Aviva FFA's management shall ensure that:

7. They fully implement the outstanding recommendations from the A-C's October 1, 2008 report, which is also noted as recommendations 4 and 6 in this report.

MOST RECENT FISCAL REVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

A fiscal review of Aviva FFA has not been posted by the A-C.

☐ ADMINISTRATION

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President & CEO
Regina Bette, LMFT

March 26, 2012

Cori Shaffer, CSA I
DCFS Out of Home Care Management Division (OHCMD)
9320 Telstar Ave, Suite 216
El Monte, CA 91731

Re: CAP for 2012 DCFS FFA Review

Dear Ms. Schaeffer:

Aviva Family and Children's Services annual FFA Review by DCFS has been completed. Below is Corrective Action Plan for noted areas on the review. As indicated, the documentation has either been collected and is on file or has been implemented since the review.

1. One Home Study of 2/26/09 was completed after annual certification date of 1/12/09.
 - a. As of May, 2009, all foster parent applicant files are reviewed for required documentation, including completed home studies *prior* to certification. However, a child was not placed in this certified foster home until 12/8/10, well after home study completion and certification.
 - b. The files are reviewed by the social worker recruiting the family as well as the FFA director. The agency maintains a cover checklist record and date of completion so that all precertification requirements are met.
2. Health screening and TB tests of all adults in a foster home will be completed and on file at Aviva Family and Children's Services prior to certification as per Title XXII regulations.
 - a. In the case of the missing health screen of a husband who was not a certified foster parent but living in the foster home, the physical exam was completed. The husband had a physical exam and found to have acceptable health as a back-up caregiver and the current health records are on file at Aviva (This document was submitted to DCFS on 3/7/12).



- b. A TB test and Health Screening that was not on file at the time of review for an adult grandson in another foster home has been completed. The grandson is in good health and the TB test was negative. (Health Screen and TB test records attached.) Aviva has improved the precertification checklist to include a recent TB test and health clearance prior to certification for any adult residing in the foster home.
3. Aviva foster homes will not have any space heaters in the foster home as this can pose a safety hazard for children. The foster home where there were space heaters on the floor and within reach of children was instructed by Aviva to totally remove the two space heaters from her home. During an unannounced visit on March 23, 2012 by the assigned Aviva Social Worker, it was verified that the space heaters are no longer at this residence.
4. Specific Foster Home review:
 - a. One foster child, age 6, had a toddler bed. The child, small for her age, met the weight and size requirements of a generic toddler bed. However, as she was nearing the weight and size limit, the agency monitored and advised foster parent to purchase a twin bed for the child. This has been completed since the review. The agency has also developed a subsequent policy of updating current type of beds for sizing of all children in agency foster homes and this will be reviewed and completed in written form during quarterly home inspections. This is to ensure that all children have appropriate sized beds to meet sizing requirements.
 - b. The same bedroom in this foster home had another twin bed that was blocking the release mechanism of window safety bar and the children needed to learn how to use the safety lever in the event of an emergency. The bed has been moved so that the safety lever is in reach and the children have been taught to release the safety lever and a fire drill was completed on 3/13/12. The attached photos indicate the new twin bed is moved and the safety lever of the window's bars is now within the children's access.
 - c. Attached is a photo of the lock on an outdoor shed. The shed has always had a double-lock but at the time of the review was unlocked.
 - d. On file at the agency is a Weapons Safety agreement and it was requested that Aviva provide evidence that the gun is locked with ammunition stored separately. The foster home has an antique gun from WWII and it is locked in a safe in the outdoor shed. There are heavy bulky items placed in front of the safe. The foster parent does not have ammunition for the gun in her home or shed. Photos are attached as well as signed statement indicating as such from foster parent.

Aviva Family and Children's Services would like to thank you for the review and appreciates that the recommended changes in the foster homes will be of benefit to the children's safety and health while in Out of Home Care. Should you have any further questions or need for further clarification, please contact me at 323-876-0550 x 1116 or abassett@avivacenter.org.

Yours truly,



Althea Bassett

Director of Foster Program/Adoptions/Intensive Treatment Foster Care